

Message Text

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E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: OVIP (KISSINGER, HENRY A.) PINR, SEDU, MX, US

SUBJECT: ACTION MEMORANDUM - ALLEGATIONS BY GOM OFFICIALS

-- OF CIA INVOLVEMENT IN UNAM DEMONSTRATIONS

-- (S/S NO. 7505508)

FOR THE SECRETARY FROM ROGERS

1. THE PROBLEM.

PRESIDENT ECHEVERRIA, SPEAKING ON THE CAMPUS OF THE NATIONAL UNIVERSITY (UNAM) ON MARCH 14, CALLED STUDENTS WHO WERE HECKLING HIM "FASCISTS" AND "YOU YOUNG PEOPLE MANIPULATED BY THE CIA." PRESIDENT FORD HAS TOLD SCOWCROFT THAT HE WANTS US TO PROTEST FIRMLY THESE STATEMENTS. THIS CABLE OUTLINES WHAT WE HAVE ALREADY DONE AND RECOMMENDS THAT ADDITIONALLY YOU SEND A PERSONAL MESSAGE TO RABASA ON THE INCIDENT.

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2. BACKGROUND/ANALYSIS.

ECHEVERRIA HAD GONE TO THE UNAM CAMPUS OSTENSIBLY TO INAUGURATE THE NEW SCHOOL YEAR BUT IN FACT WAS SEEKING TO SYMBOLIZE THE "SUCCESS OF HIS FIVE-YEAR DIALOGUE WITH YOUTH." HE MISCALCULATED STUDENT REACTION. HE WAS LOUDLY HECKLED THROUGHOUT HIS SPEECH AND FINALLY LEFT THE CAMPUS UNDER A BARRAGE OF ROCKS, BOTTLES AND JEERS.

ALTHOUGH ECHEVERRIA DID NOT PERSONALLY REPEAT HIS ALLEGATIONS ABOUT THE CIA AFTER LEAVING THE CAMPUS, THE FOLLOWING COMMENTS WERE CARRIED IN THE PRESS:

(A) - FOREIGN SECRETARY RABASA - "ONE HAS TO START WITH THE ASSUMPTION, ALWAYS, THAT THE CIA OPERATES IN ALL LATIN AMERICAN COUNTRIES, SAVE PROOF TO THE CONTRARY." RABASA SAID IF ANY DIPLOMAT WAS INVOLVED IN THE INCIDENT "WE'LL EXPEL HIM IMMEDIATELY AND PRESENT A VIGOROUS PROTEST." (B) ATTORNEY GENERAL OJEDA PAULLADA - "WHO OPPOSES A GOVERNMENT THAT FIGHTS AGAINST IMPERIALISM? THOSE DIRECTLY AFFECTED BY THAT GOVERNMENT. DIALECTICALLY THERE'S NO OTHER ANSWER. AND IT IS SAID THAT FROM THE UNITED STATES AS WELL AS FROM OTHER CAPITALISTIC, DEVELOPED COUNTRIES, THERE COMES AN IMPERIALISTIC CURRENT." (C) ATTORNEY GENERAL OF THE FEDERAL DISTRICT CASTELLANOS COUTINO - "UNFORTUNATELY, WHAT AT FIRST WAS MERE CONJECTURE ABOUT CIA INVOLVEMENT IN MEXICO APPEARS TO BE TAKING ON A CERTAIN VERACITY." OFFICIALS OF MEXICO'S RULING PARTY, LEGISLATORS, NEWSPAPER COLUMNISTS AND PEASANTS' GROUPS ALSO SUPPORTED ECHEVERRIA'S ACCUSATIONS; AND THE MARCH 14 EVENTS WILL BE DEBATED BY THE MEXICAN SENATE ON MARCH 20.

IN RESPONSE TO QUESTIONS FROM US AND MEXICAN NEWSMEN AMBASSADOR JOVA ON MARCH 17 CATEGORICALLY DENIED THAT THERE WAS ANY US INVOLVEMENT IN THE REGRETTABLE INCIDENT INVOLVING THE PRESIDENT. HIS STATEMENT WAS GIVEN FRONT PAGE TREATMENT BY EXCELSIOR AND OTHER PAPERS. THAT SAME DAY BILL BOWDLER ASKED AMBASSADOR DE OLLOQUI TO COME TO THE DEPARTMENT. HE REITERATED THE DENIAL, EXPRESSED DEEP CONCERN OVER SUCH UNFOUNDED ALLEGATIONS AND ASKED DE OLLOQUI TO RELAY THESE VIEWS TO RABASA. BILL ALSO ASKED

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JOHN JOVA TO FOLLOW UP WITH RABASA AT AN EARLY OPPORTUNITY. JOHN HAS NOT SEEN EMILIO BUT HE HAS TALKED WITH GALLASTEGUI. WHILE WE HAVE MADE OUR VIEWS CLEAR TO THE GOM AND THERE HAS BEEN NO FURTHER REPETITION OF THE CIA CHARGES, I THINK A LETTER FROM YOU MIGHT BE HELPFUL IN PREVENTING MORE ACCUSATIONS IN THE MEXICAN SENATE DEBATE OVER THE INCIDENT.

3. I RECOMMEND THE FOLLOWING LETTER TO RABASA:

QUOTE: DEAR EMILIO,

I WAS VERY SORRY TO HEAR OF THE UNFORTUNATE INCIDENT INVOLVING PRESIDENT ECHEVERRIA WHEN HE VISITED THE CAMPUS OF THE NATIONAL AUTONOMOUS UNIVERSITY OF MEXICO ON MARCH 14.

AT THE SAME TIME, HOWEVER, I WAS SURPRISED AND CONCERNED TO LEARN THAT HE HAD ACCUSED THE CIA OF MANIPULATING THE STUDENTS AGAINST HIM. MY CONCERN DEEPENED WHEN I WAS TOLD THAT YOU AND OTHER SENIOR OFFICIALS HAD MADE PARALLEL PUBLIC ALLEGATIONS.

AS JOHN JOVA HAS SAID PUBLICLY AND BILL BOWDLER HAS TOLD AMBASSADOR DE OLLOQUI, THERE IS ABSOLUTELY NO BASIS FOR THE CHARGE THAT THE CIA WAS IN ANY WAY INVOLVED IN THE INCIDENT AT THE NATIONAL AUTONOMOUS UNIVERSITY. FRANKLY, EMILIO, I AM MUCH CONCERNED THAT SUCH UNFOUNDED CHARGES WILL GIVE CREDENCE TO THOSE ACCUSATIONS IN THE VIEW OF THE MEXICAN PEOPLE. IT WILL ALSO INTRODUCE A LAMENTABLE SUSPICION AND DISTRUST IN UNITED STATES-MEXICAN RELATIONS AND CAST A SHADOW ON THE MANY GOOD THINGS WHICH WE AND OUR RESPECTIVE PRESIDENTS HAVE DONE OVER RECENT YEARS.

I HOPE THE CHARGES WILL NOT BE REPEATED AND ASK YOUR HELP IN THIS REGARD.

-- WARMEST BEST WISHES,

-- HENRY. UNQUOTE.

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4. RECOMMENDATION.

THAT YOU APPROVE THE LETTER TO FOREIGN SECRETARY RABASA.

APPROVE DISAPPROVE

INGERSOLL

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